(d) Consequent to the issue of order dated 28th February, 2002, no specific reactions have been received from the Central Government Employees Trade Unions.

Agricultural loans to women

1726. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some banks are not extending agricultural loans to women;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to take steps to provide such loans to women?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) As per extant policy of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), all domestic scheduled commercial banks are required to lend 18 per cent of their Net Bank Credit to agriculture. There is no distinction to be made on the basis of gender. However, with a view to strengthening the credit delivery to women, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has advised all public sector banks to earmark 5 per cent of their Net Bank Credit (NBC) for lending to women by 31st March, 2004. This is expected to boost agricultural lending to women as well.

Model stock market exchange

t1727. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would consider to set up a model exchange with a view to keep in declining confidence of investors in share market as well as to maintain the credibility of share workers;

(b) if so, by when; and

t Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the manner in which the share market activities are likely to be monitored?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) does not set up stock exchanges. In exercise of powers under Section 4 of the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956, it only grants recognition to stock exchanges. SEBI currently does not have any proposal to set up a model stock exchange.

(b) and (c) In view of reply to part (a), do not arise.

Investors Protection Fund

1728. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any claims under Investors Protection Fund (IPF) have been lodged with National Stock Exchange, by Stock Broker during the last one year;

(b) whether NSE has not settled any claims of small investors below Rupees five lacs during the above period;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and why should NSE collect funds for IPF: and

(d) whether the Ministry would take over the IPF for the benefit of small investors, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL):(a) National Stock Exchange (NSE) has intimated that according to current guidelines in respect of Investors Protection Fund (IPF) and the rules made by NSE, only claims of investors can be paid out of IPF and claims of brokers cannot be entertained against IPF.

(b) and (c) The total number of claims received from investors during the period March, 2001 to February, 2002 are 527, out of which 21 have been settled, which are all below Rupees five lacs per